

SERMON NOTES Sunday 15 September

sunnysidechurch

Bible passages Psalm 116.1-9 and Mark 8.27-end

Introduction

- Like seeing earth from space, both readings encourage us to see things differently and then live in the truth of that
- Pivotal point in Mark's Gospel: until now Jesus has been travelling around Galilee with his disciples 'proclaiming the good news of God' (Mark 1.14)
- Caesarea Phillipi in far north of Israel. Predominantly non-Jewish area which a major centre for the worship of Pan
- After this incident Jesus heads for Jerusalem and what awaits him there

Who do you say I am?

- 'Who do other people say I am?': John the Baptist or Elijah (ie prophets who prepare was for Messiah)
- Peter's answer is that Jesus is not someone coming to tell them about the Messiah but the Messiah himself
- Question we are all asked and need to answer for ourselves

Change of perspective

- Recognising who Jesus is changes how we see things
- James Edwards: 'Faith is a judgement about Jesus and a willingness to act on that judgement in the face of other judgements'

Conclusion

- Knowing Jesus as Messiah will put joys and challenges of life in their proper, eternal perspective

Some questions for discussion

1. Caesarea Philippi is in an area of Israel that was given to the Tribe of Dan who were known as the 'compromise tribe'. How is this a challenge for us today?
2. Read Mark.8-27-end. What strikes you about this passage?
3. Jesus did not ask the disciples this question until they had been with him some time and they clearly do not fully understand what their answer means yet. How might this help us think about our journey of faith and evangelism?
4. Read Psalm 116.1-9. How do these verses help us understand more about what it means to take up our cross?
5. Can you think of examples from your own life where knowing Jesus has given you a different perspective for challenges or sorrows you have faced?
6. 'Faith is a judgement about Jesus and a willingness to act on that judgement in the face of other judgements' (Edwards). What might this look like for you this week?
7. What is God asking you to do as a result of what he has said to you through these passages? It might be something to pray about, something to think more about, something he wants you to talk to someone about or something he wants you to do. Make a note of it so you don't forget!

'The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion.' (Psalm 116.5)

Why not spend some time thanking God for who he is and asking him to help you see things with his eyes?

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